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SUBJECT: UN: FIFTH COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER SG'S REPORT ON
DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

¶1. Summary. The report of the Secretary-General (SYG) on disarmament, demobilization, and integration (A/60/705) notes an increased engagement of the United Nations in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes in complex peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping operations over the past five years, including lessons learned from the operations. The report also addresses the development of a new approach to DDR within the United Nations system, based on lessons learned. This new policy approach, referred to as the integrated DDR standards, was created by the Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR, comprising 15 United Nations agencies, departments, funds and programs. The standards provide a comprehensive set of policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures on all aspects of DDR. They emphasize: a people-centered approach, stressing the inclusion of intended participants, and beneficiaries, specific needs in DDR; a flexible, transparent and accountable approach; an integrated approach centered on the principles of integration, especially in the area of program planning and implementation; and a national ownership centered approach, encouraging governments and citizens in post-conflict countries to take on responsibility for DDR programming. The conclusions and recommendations of the report are detailed below. End summary.

¶2. Review of UN engagement in DDR since 2000: Since the issuance in 2000 of the SYG report on the role of UN peacekeeping in DDR (S/2000/101), six peacekeeping operations (MONUC, UNMIL, UNOCI, ONUB, MINUSTAH, UNMIS) have included DDR as part of their mandate. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and other agencies, funds, departments and programs of the UN system have also played a key role in supporting the development of DDR programs, strategies and the implementation of a variety of activities. The UN has placed particular emphasis on demobilizing and removing children used by armed forces and groups in situations of ongoing conflict.

¶3. Lessons learned: As a result of the UN engagement in DDR, a number of important lessons have been learned on how to approach this process going forward. Some key lessons learned are: (a) DDR cannot be implemented in isolation from the broader peacebuilding and recovery process; (b) successful DDR is contingent on the political will of all parties to the conflict; (c) the sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants is a key objective and determinant of success; (d) given a number of converging factors, HIV/AIDS and sexual and gender-based violence are widespread in armed conflict and post-conflict environments and DDR programs must include HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and treatment.

¶4. New UN approach to DDR: The Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR was established and mandated to carry on the work of improving the Organization's performance in the area of DDR. Fifteen departments, agencies, funds and programs are represented in the Working Group and together they have developed new policies and concepts for planning and

implementing DDR operations in a peacekeeping context. These policies and concepts are known as the integrated DDR standards (IDDRS).

¶15. Integrated DDR standards: The IDDRS have been developed by the Inter-Agency Working Group in order to better plan, develop, implement and monitor DDR programs. The standards are divided into five levels: (1) introduction to the standards and a glossary; (2) strategic concepts of an integrated approach to DDR in a peacekeeping context; (3) planning and implementation structures used at Headquarters and in the field; (4) considerations, options and tools for undertaking DDR operations and; (5) UN approach to critical cross-cutting issues, such as gender, youth and children.

¶16. Integrated DDR standards (cont.): The development of the Organization's integrated approach to DDR represents an important first step towards greater integration. The IDDRS are expected to contribute towards a common UN approach; improved planning, communication, coordination and cooperation at Headquarters and in the field; a coherent and comprehensive basis for the UN to engage with different partners, including Member States; timely, effective and well-resourced implementation of DDR programs through both assessed and voluntary contributions; greater cooperation between military and civilian training centers and; development of the capacity and knowledge of field-based UN staff.

¶17. Disarmament: Lessons learned have shown that the failure to comprehensively disarm former combatants and to develop legislation and policy to manage and control legally and illegally held weapons can seriously undermine long-term peace, stability and recovery efforts.

¶18. Demobilization: The demobilization strategy needs to

strike a balance between assistance and entitlement so as to avoid any perceptions that combatants are being rewarded for their role in a conflict. In particular, cash benefits for children should be avoided. In the aftermath of the DDR program in Liberia, the UN found that the payment of a US\$300 transitional safety-net allowance had a significantly negative impact on children, who were exposed to abuse and exploitation by their commanders, who wanted a share of the cash benefit.

¶19. Reintegration: Sustainable social and economic reintegration of former combatants should be the ultimate objective of DDR programs. Failure to assist ex-combatants to reintegrate will undermine the achievements of the disarmament and demobilization phase, placing the entire program at risk and increasing instability. A successful reintegration program will not only prevent a return to violence, it will also contribute to the recovery and development of a State that is emerging from a conflict. Reintegration benefits must also be tailored, based on gender, age, educational qualifications and physical ability of the recipient. The role of women and girls in providing care for demobilized combatants, especially those who are underage, traumatized, disabled or chronically ill, must be recognized and supported.

¶10. Funding: One of the main problems encountered in past UN DDR operations is the absence of adequate, timely and sustained funding. This has frequently resulted in a gap between disarmament and demobilization on the one hand, which are relatively easy to fund, plan and implement, and reintegration on the other, which is dependent on voluntary contributions and on expertise and conditions that are not always present in a timely manner in a post-conflict environment. However, with proper planning and coordination, it is possible for the reintegration programs to be adequately resourced from the outset. Comment: Funding for disarmament and demobilization is included in the assessed budget of peacekeeping missions while funding for reintegration is provided solely from voluntary

contributions. End comment.

¶11. Recommendations: Headquarters would ensure additional support to DDR programs in the field through integrated program support. The Inter-Agency Working Group would continue to strengthen and consolidate the partnership it has built up over the past two years. It would also engage with partners outside the UN, assist with training, resource mobilization and planning, and provide support to current and future DDR programs. The existing secretariat should therefore be expanded to include additional staff from other departments, agencies, funds and programs and mandated to provide wider support to DDR. With regard to the implementation of the integrated DDR standards, this would require the establishment of new coordination mechanisms which could include all or some of the following: (a) integrated DDR teams (such as those in Haiti and the Sudan), staffed jointly by personnel of UNDP and the DPKO, as well as other agencies; (b) a UN country team DDR steering group to facilitate the exchange of information, joint planning and operations within the peacekeeping mission and with the country team. Comment: The resource implications of these recommendations to assessed peacekeeping budgets are unclear and USUN will seek further clarification when the report is introduced in the Fifth Committee this Spring. End comment.

¶12. Recommendations (cont.): Integration, especially at the country level, is constrained by administrative, managerial, budgetary and operational challenges. These challenges must be overcome if the new approach to DDR is to be achieved. It is therefore recommended that efforts be made to continue to build an organizational culture receptive to integrated DDR programs and units through the continued provision of joint training, mission etc. Also, the departments, agencies, funds and programs that have contributed to the development of the new approach to DDR should continue to participate in integrated planning, implementation and evaluation. It is also recommended that the online resource center be further developed for it to remain a useful tool for policymakers and practitioners both at Headquarters and the country level. Apart from consolidating information and lessons learned on past and current programs, it should also function as a communication and exchange platform for those working on DDR issues. This would require further voluntary funding, which the SYG encourages Member States to provide. The UN would also support strong national ownership throughout the DDR process. A key priority in the coming years would be to strengthen and consolidate partnerships with the World Bank, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations. Finally, the process of developing the integrated DDR standards in itself provides a good lesson for the UN ahead of the establishment of the peacebuilding commission.

¶13. The Fifth Committee is expected to consider the report of the SG at its second resumed session this Spring.

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